# Best Trapping Practices

**The illustrations and data provided in these documents were inspired from the results of the trap testing completed through the work of the Trap Research and Development Committee of the Fur Institute of Canada**

FUR INSTITUTE OF CANADA

May 2025

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**May 2025**

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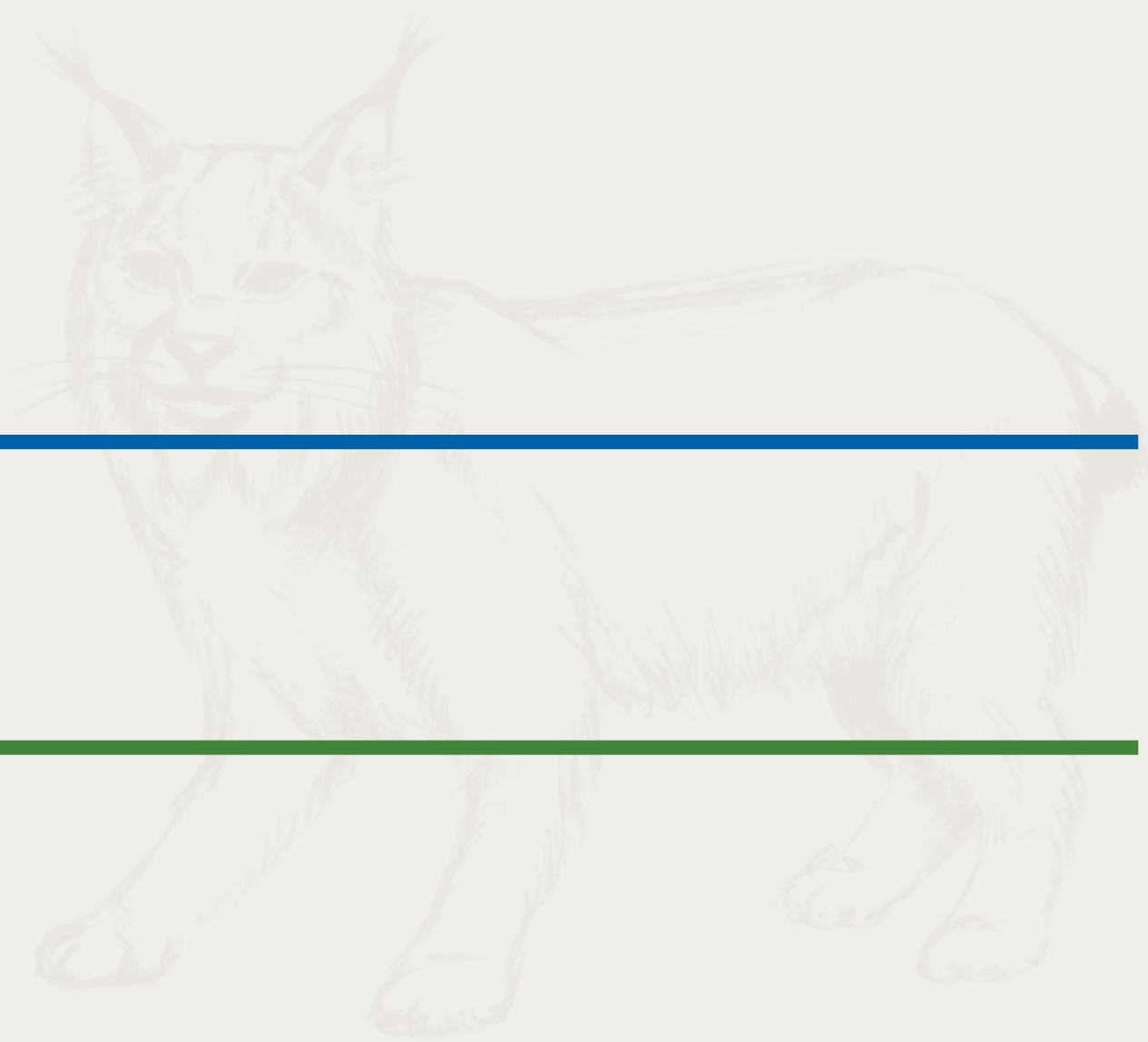

## KILLING TRAPS


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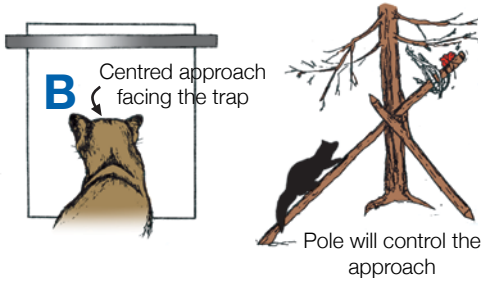
# IMPORTANT NOTICE:

Check with the authorities in charge of wildlife to confirm regulations related to trap use in your trapping area.

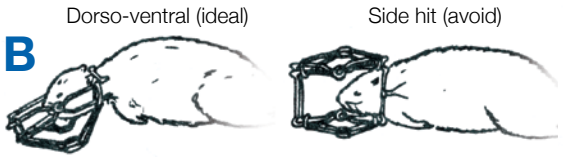
➡ *Check with the authorities in charge of wildlife to confirm regulations related to trap use in your trapping area*

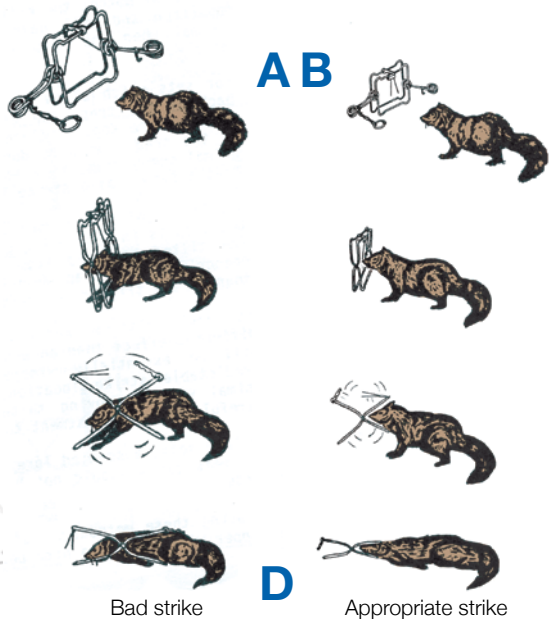
## Principles

### Approach angle

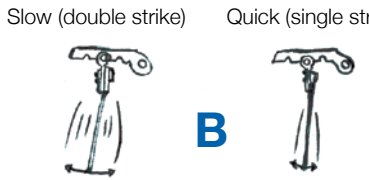



### Trap position

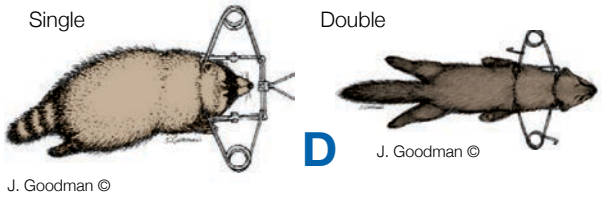



### Trigger Adjustment




### Strike type




## Criteria

**A** Trap dimensions (adapted to the size of the animal);

**B** Set (angle of approach by the animal, trap position, trigger position and configuration, trigger adjustment);

**C** Trap Model Mechanical properties (velocity, momentum and clamping forces);

**D** Strike locations (targeted vital strike zones).

⇨ Illustrations show rotating jaw traps but can be applied to other killing type traps.

These criteria and principles apply to species-specific killing traps. For a list of certified traps for each species, see:

**fur.ca/certified-traps/**



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# Best Trapping Practices

## MUSKRAT | KILLING TRAPS

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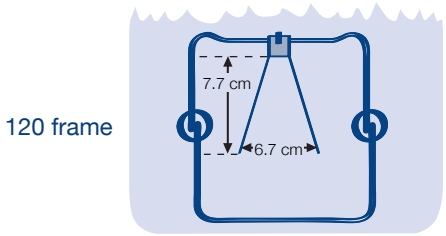
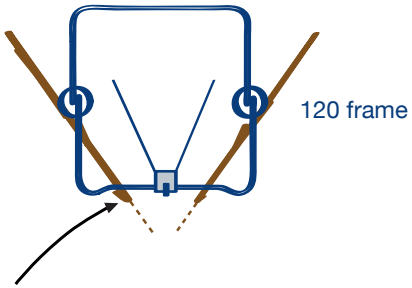
## To Get Optimal Lethal Strike Locations

### On land and submerged

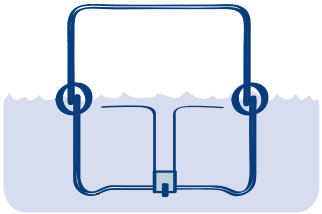


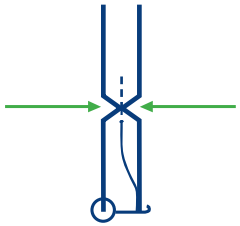

### Burrow or house entrance

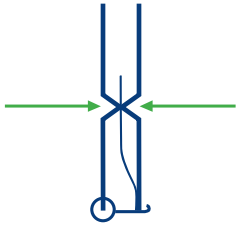



Guiding sticks to reduce the opening thereby allowing rapid contact with the trigger

### Semi-submerged

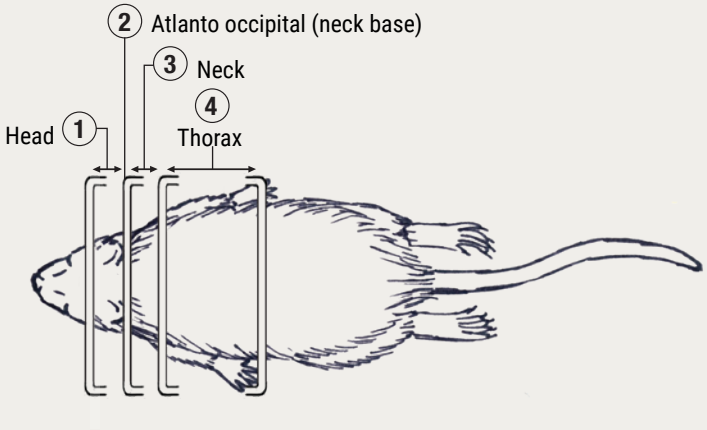






← = Approach by the animal

| Strike Type | Recommended Strike Locations | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | ① | ② | ③ | ④ |
| Single | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |




These specifications only apply to killing traps for this species. For a list of certified traps, see:

**fur.ca/certified-traps/**



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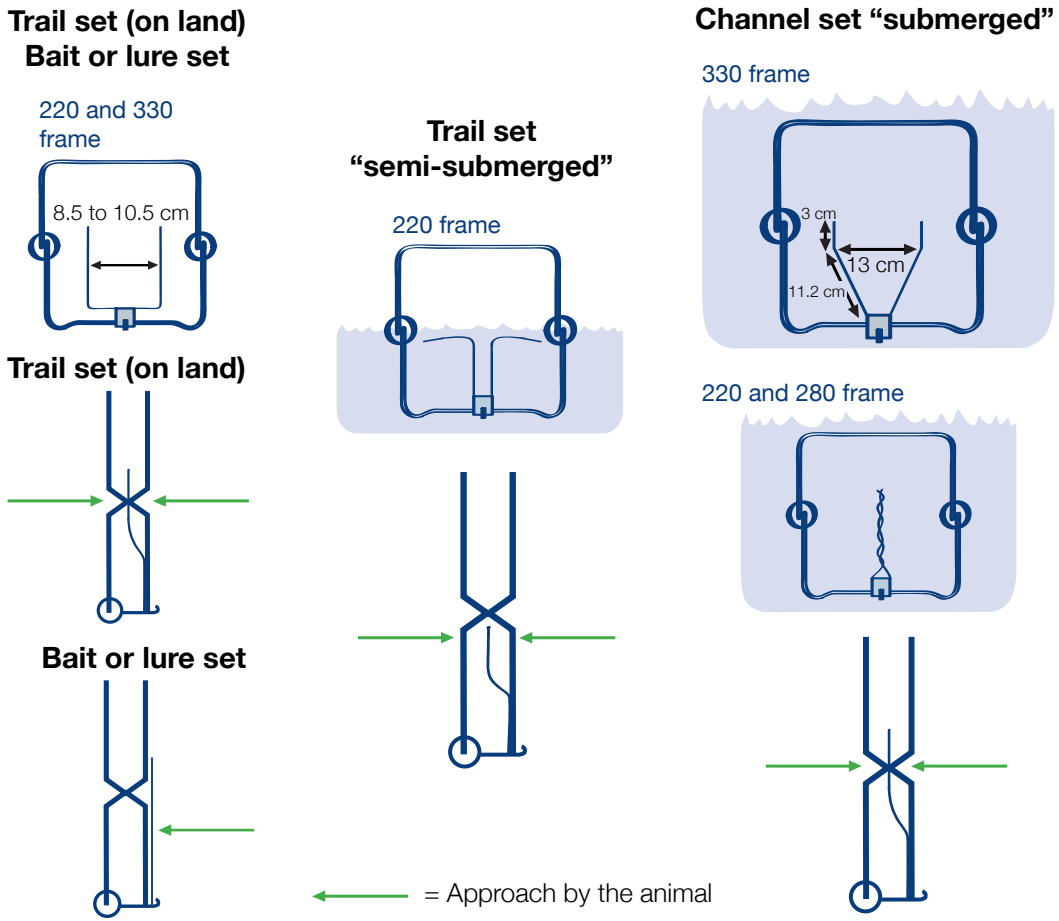
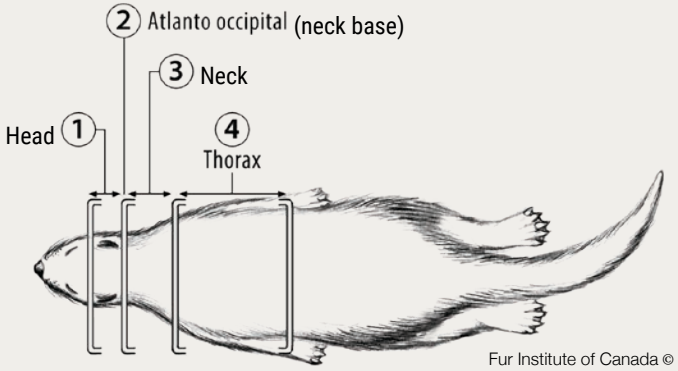
➡ *Check with the authorities in charge of wildlife to confirm regulations related to trap use in your trapping area*

## To Get Optimal Lethal Strike Locations




| Strike Types | Recommended Strike Locations | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | ① | ② | ③ | ④ |
| Single | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Double* | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |

* Any combination of thorax ④ and strike location ① or ② or ③.

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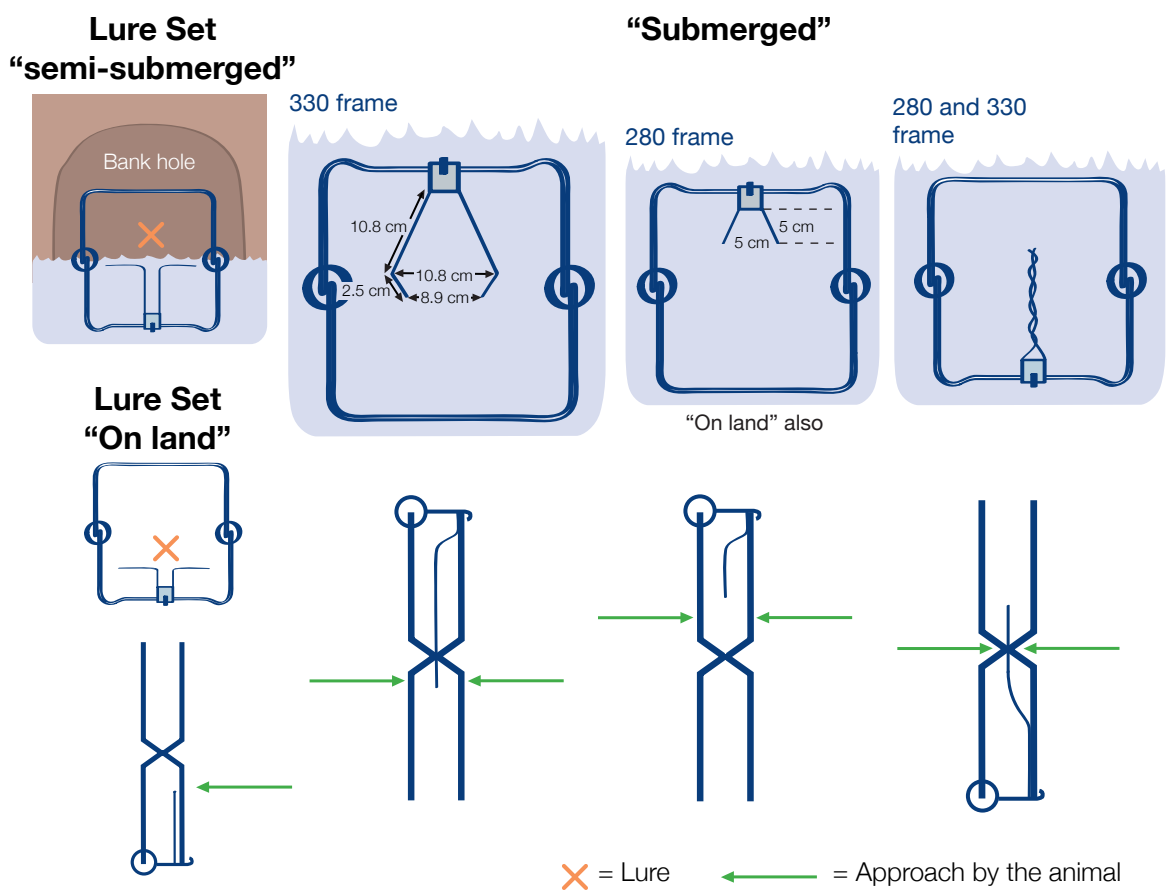
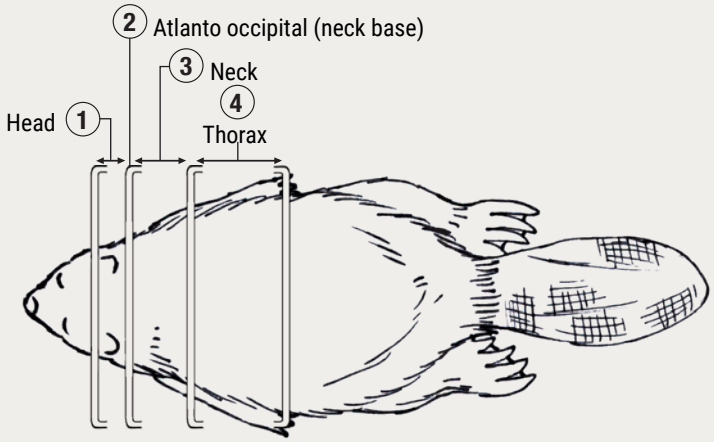
## To Get Optimal Lethal Strike Locations




| Strike Types | Recommended Strike Locations | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | ① | ② | ③ | ④ |
| Single | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Double* | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |

* Any combination of thorax ④ and strike location ① or ② or ③.

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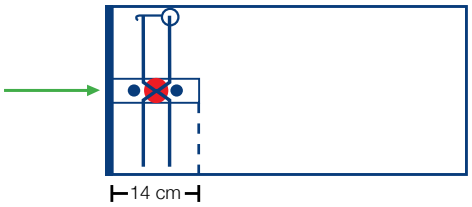
## To Get Optimal Lethal Strike Locations

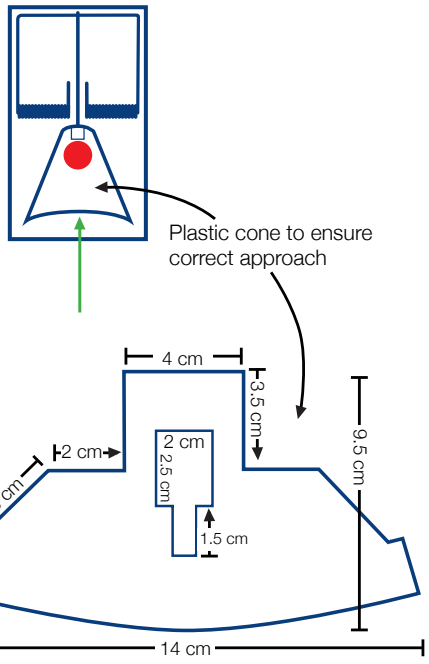
### "Closed" Box trap

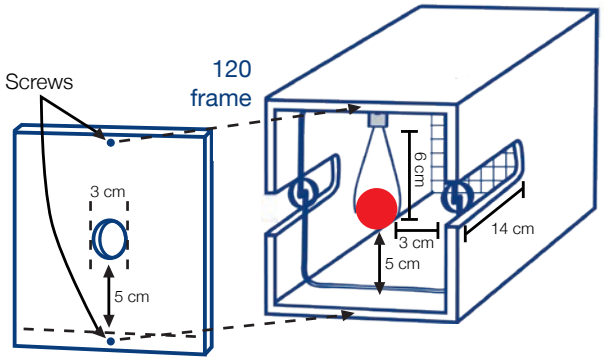
Double rotating jaws / baited trigger




Reduced opening for better selectivity and approach by the animal

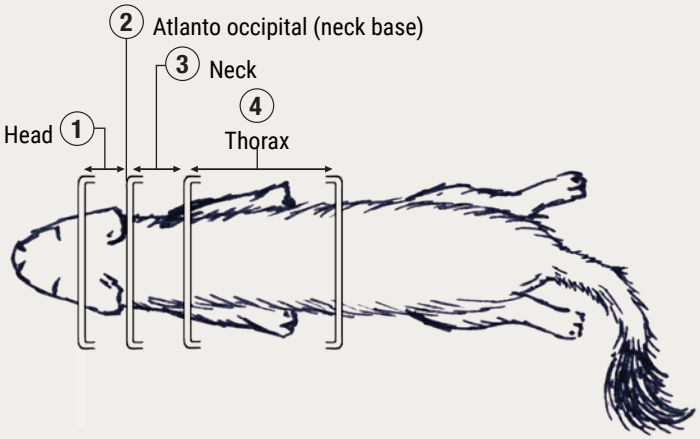
Modified Rat Trap




● = Bait ← = Approach by the animal

| Strike Type | Recommended Strike Locations | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | ① | ② | ③ | ④ |
| Single | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |

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**fur.ca/certified-traps/**



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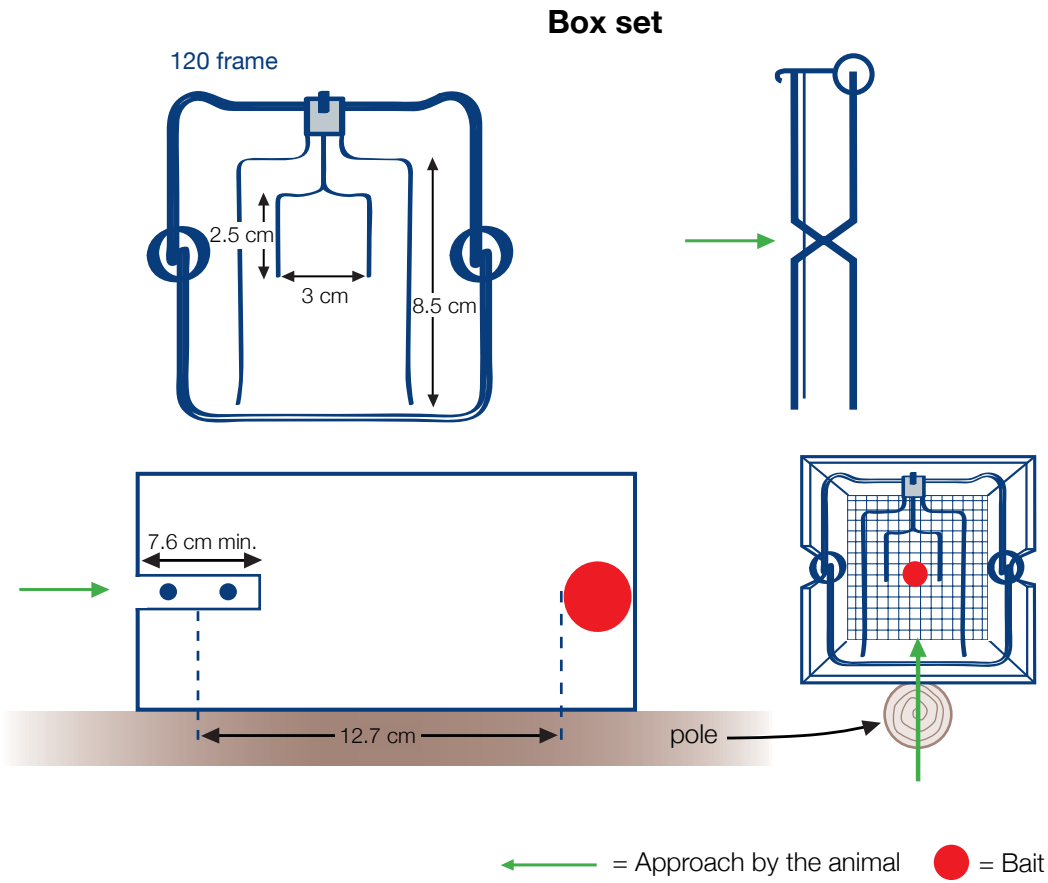
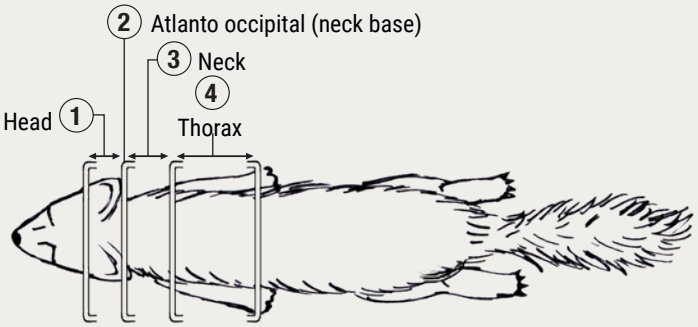
## To Get Optimal Lethal Strike Locations




| Strike Types | Recommended Strike Locations | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | ① | ② | ③ | ④ |
| Single | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Double* | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |

* Any combination of thorax ④ **and strike location** ① or ② or ③.

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# Best Trapping Practices

## FISHER | KILLING TRAPS

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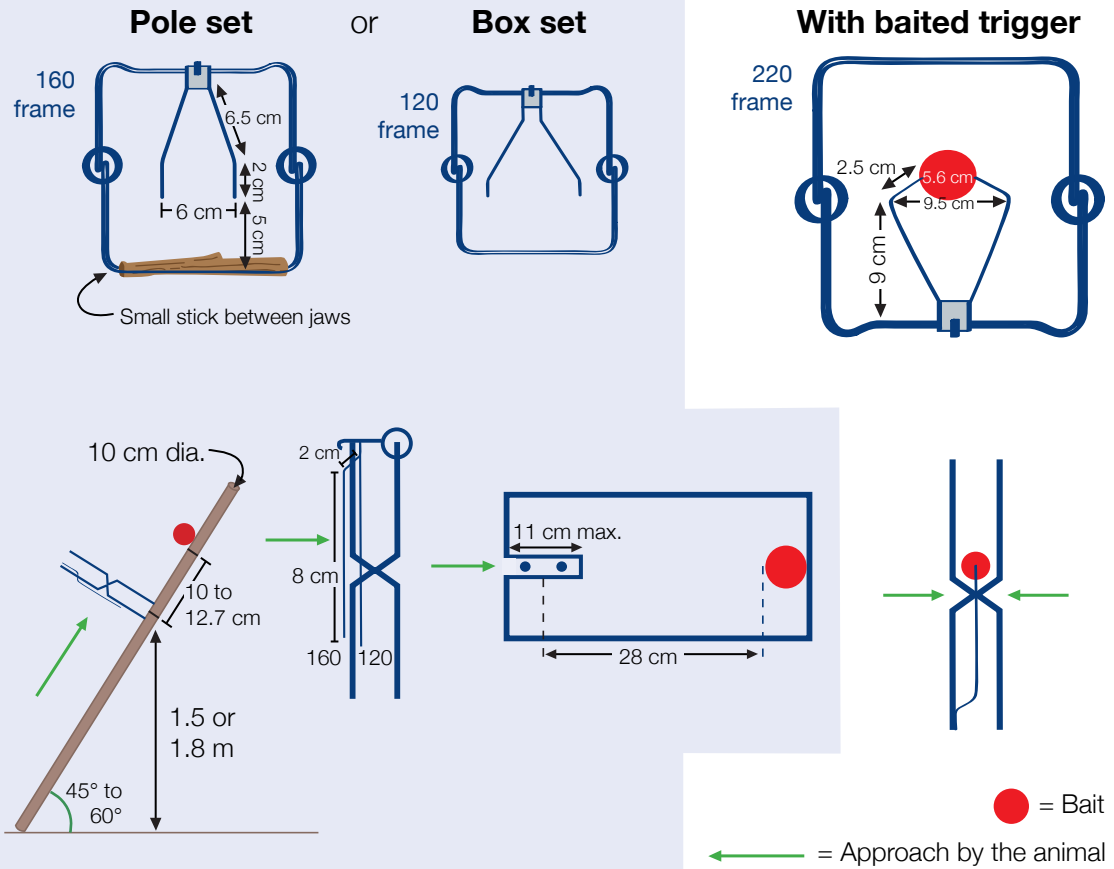
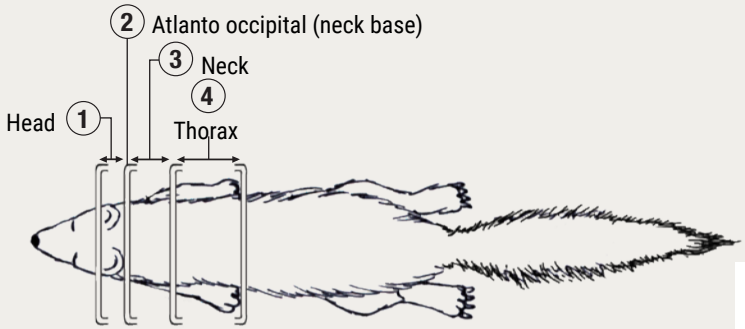
## To Get Optimal Lethal Strike Locations




| Strike Type | Recommended Strike Location | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | ① | ② | ③ | ④ |
| Single | | ✓ | | |

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**fur.ca/certified-traps/**



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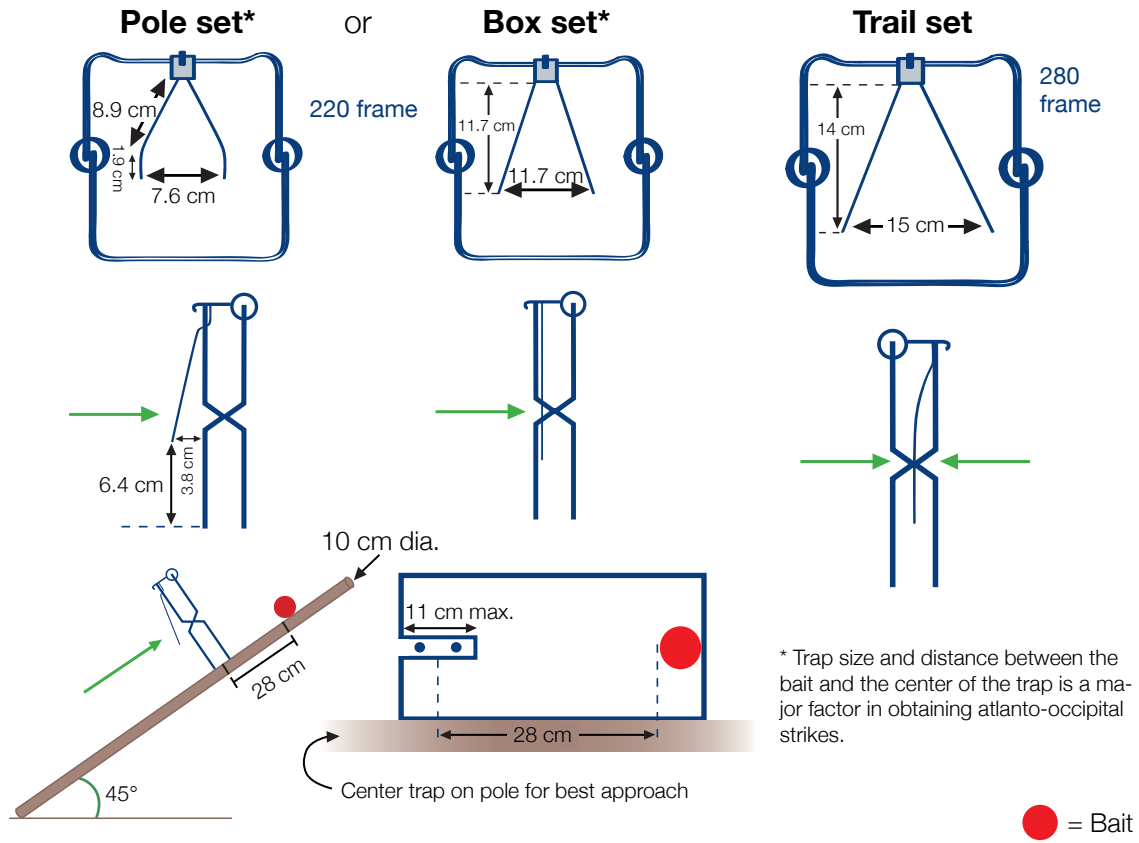
# Best Trapping Practices

## RACCOON | KILLING TRAPS

➡ *Check with the authorities in charge of wildlife to confirm regulations related to trap use in your trapping area*

## To Get Optimal Lethal Strike Locations



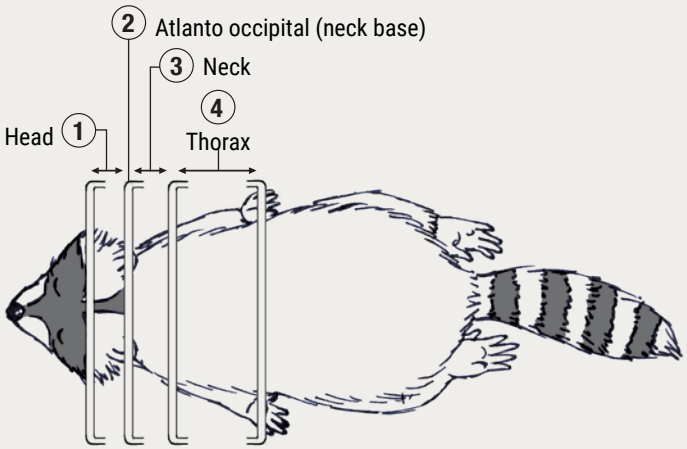

* Trap size and distance between the bait and the center of the trap is a major factor in obtaining atlanto-occipital strikes.

Sets above the ground (vertical or horizontal) is to avoid captures by a front leg

● = Bait

⟵ = Approach by the animal

| Strike Type | Recommended Strike Location | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | ① | ② | ③ | ④ |
| Single | | ✓ | | |

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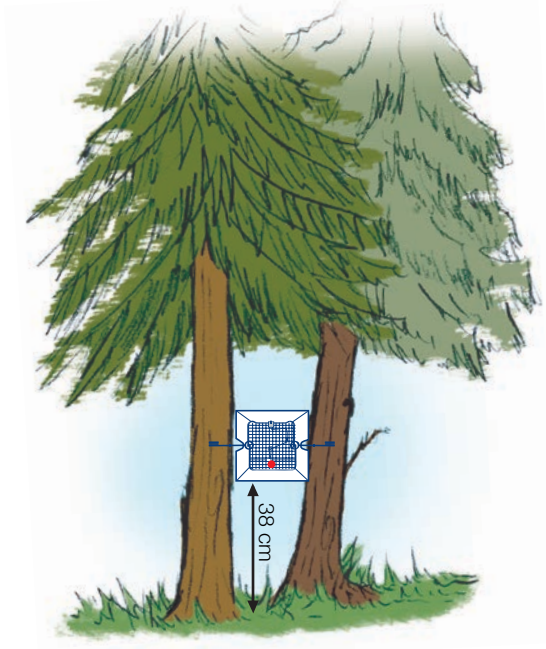
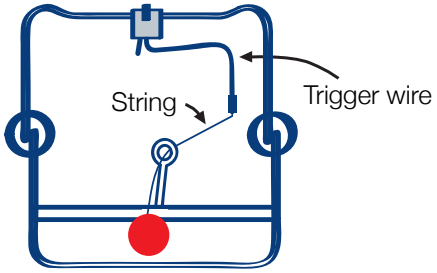
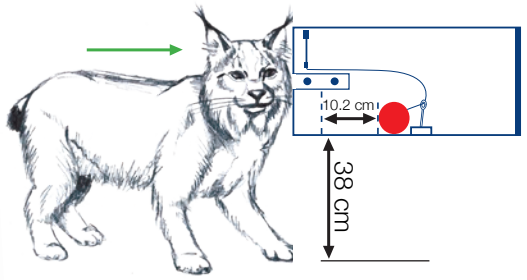
## To Get Optimal Lethal Strike Locations

**Set details**




**Pull trigger**



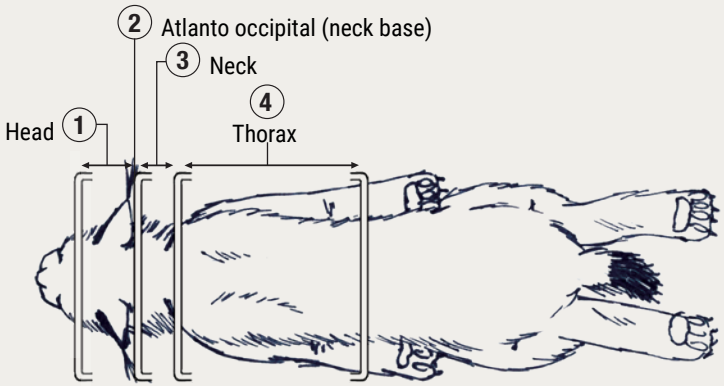




Technique to encourage lynx to take the bait with its mouth thus avoiding capture by a front paw.

● = Bait

← = Approach by the animal

| Strike Type | Recommended Strike Location | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | ① | ② | ③ | ④ |
| Single | | | ✓ | |

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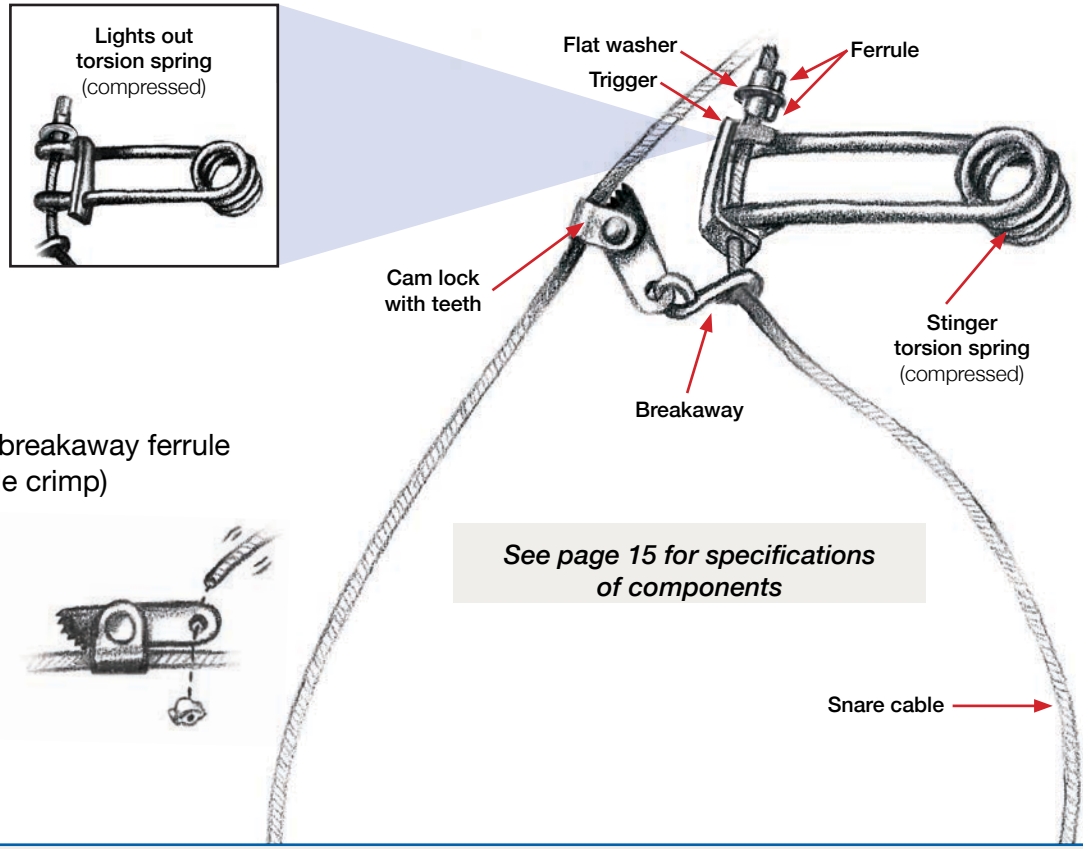
## Types of cable (galvanized steel)

| Target species | Diameter (inches) | Construction |
|---|---|---|
| + Lynx/Bobcat Fox/Coyote | 1/16 and 5/64 | 1 x 19 and 7 x 7 |
| Wolf | 3/32 and 5/64 | 1 x 19 and 7 x 7 |

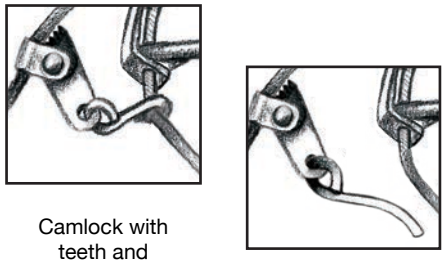
## Recommended design and components




*See page 15 for specifications of components*

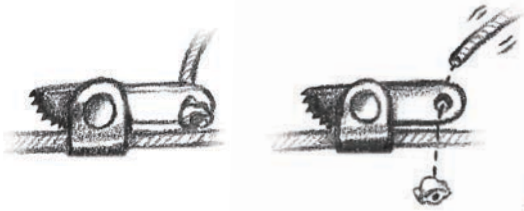
## Types of breakaway devices

S-Hook + J-Hook



Camlock with teeth and S-Hook

Camlock with breakaway ferrule (single crimp)



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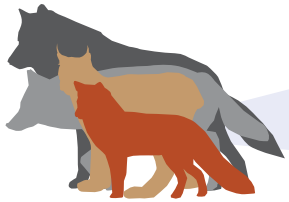
## Recommended Parts



### Torsion springs

| Model | Foxes | Lynx/ Bobcat | Coyote | Wolf |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| *Stinger 22 Mag Economy | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | |
| *Stinger 22 Mag Deluxe | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓(1) |
| *Stinger 33 Mag Deluxe | | | ✓ | ✓(1) + (2) |
| *Stinger 44 Terminator | | | ✓ | ✓(1) + (2) |
| **Lights Out A1 | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓(1) |
| **Lights Out Signature 75 | | | ✓ | ✓(1) + (2) |
| Signature Series 85 | | | ✓ | ✓(1) + (2) |

*All Stinger springs to be mounted with #2 trigger.
**All Lights out springs to be mounted with Lights Out incorporated trigger.

**Camlocks with teeth (e.g. Bridger Sure-Hold Camlock with teeth) or other designs that will stay in place while the torsion spring is opening. They must be of the same diameter as the snare cable.**

### Breakaway devices

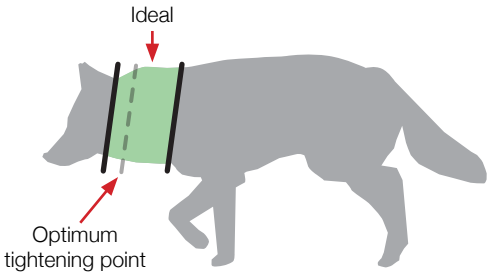
| Breakaway model | Hold foxes/lynx/ bobcat | Hold coyote/ foxes/lynx/ bobcat | Hold wolf/coyote/ foxes/lynx/ bobcat | Release white-tailed deer/mule/ caribou (Caught by a leg) | Release elk/moosel (Caught by a leg) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Senneker S-Hook 265 | ✓ | | | ✓ | ✓ |
| Senneker S-Hook 385 | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ |
| Senneker S-Hook 750 | ✓ | ✓ | ✓(1) | | ✓ |
| Senneker S-Hook 1000 | ✓ | ✓ | ✓(1) + (2) | | ✓ |
| **Snare Shop** | | | | | |
| S-Hook 285 | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ |
| S-Hook 525 | ✓ | ✓ | ✓(1) | | ✓ |
| Sullivan S-Hook 280 | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ |
| J-Hook 285 | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ |
| J-Hook 350 | ✓ | ✓ | | | ✓ |
| **Fastach #150 or Ferrule/single crimp** | | | | | |
| 1/16” cable | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ |
| 3/32” cable | ✓ | ✓ | ✓(1) + (2) | | ✓ |
| 5/64” cable | ✓ | ✓ | ✓(1) | | ✓ |
| Fastach | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ |

**Note: the breakaway model numbers may not match the values obtained by standardized testing (e.g. S-Hook 285 releases at 335 lb).**

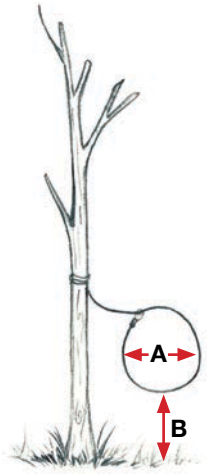
(1) Eastern wolf
(2) Western wolf

➡ *Check with the authorities in charge of wildlife to confirm regulations related to trap use in your trapping area*

## Strike zone (Canids + Felids)

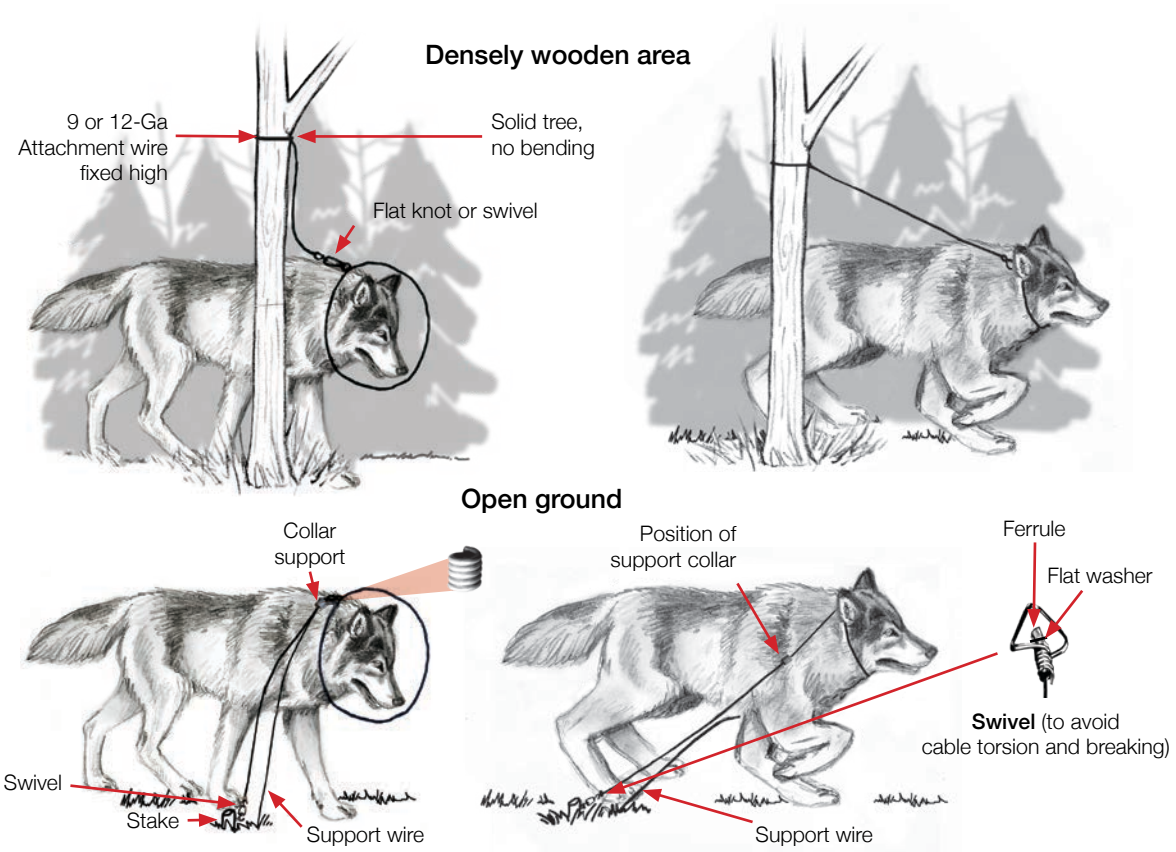



## Loop diameters and setting heights




| Species | A | B |
|---|---|---|
| Fox | 18 cm (7”) | 18 cm (7”) |
| Bobcat | 20.5 cm (8”) | 20.5 cm (8”) |
| Lynx | 20.5 cm (8”) | 30.5 cm (12”) |
| Coyote | 25 cm (10”) | 25 cm (10 to 12”) |
| Wolf | 35 cm (14”) | 35 cm (14”) |
| Wolf (Northern) | 40.5 cm (16”) | 45.5 cm (18”) |

## Snare set sites and attachment points vs. strike zone (Canids + Felids)



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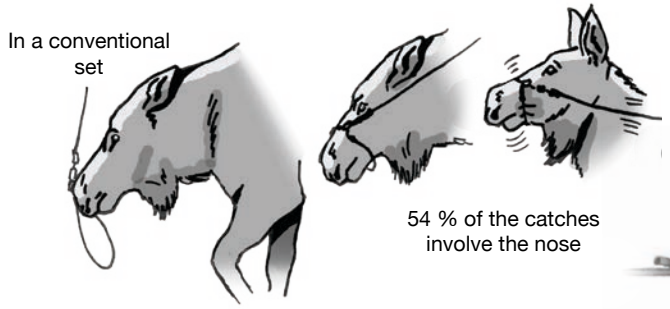
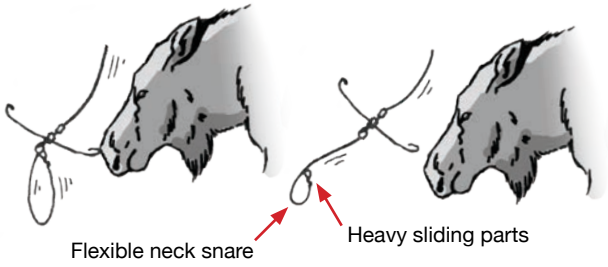
**To avoid capture and retention of cervidae, cattle and sheep, killing neck snares must be constructed and set the proper way.**

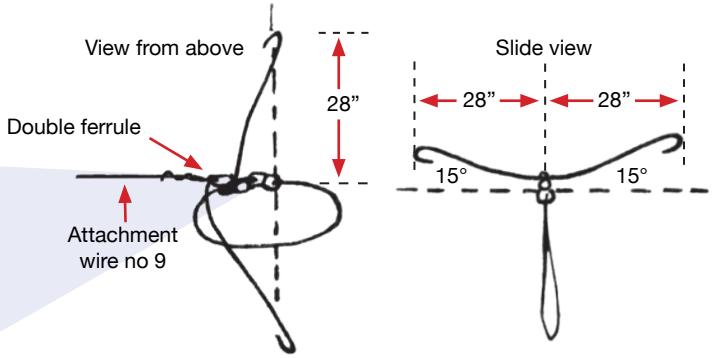
Accidental catches of moose in neck snares intended for wolves




Using a diverter wire



Diverter; wire no 11 (set details)



Leg catch = rupture produced by S-Hook

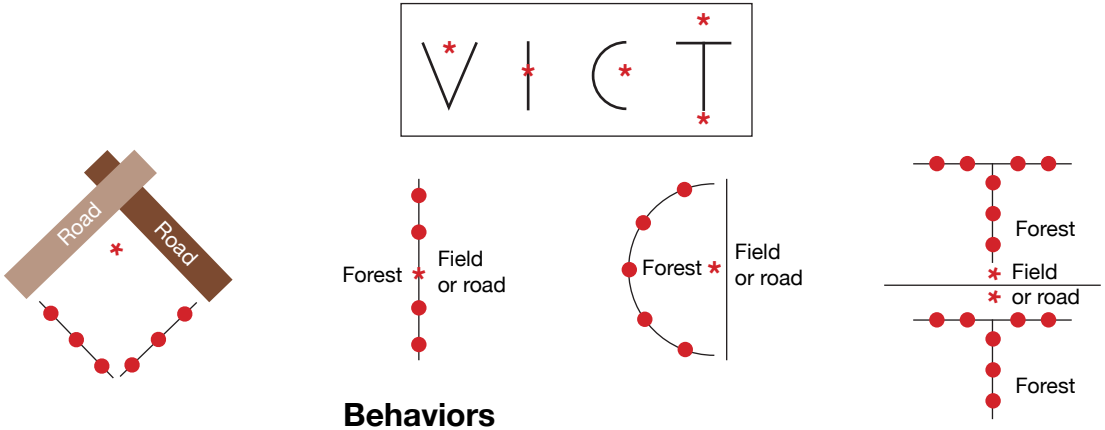


Update: May 2025

➡ *Check with the authorities in charge of wildlife to confirm regulations related to trap use in your trapping area*

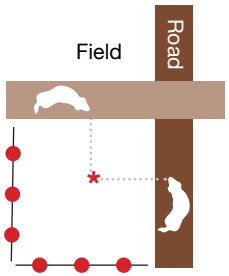
## General Set Guidelines (dogs, eagles, birds of prey) - solutions

### 1. Proper neck snares and attractives positioning



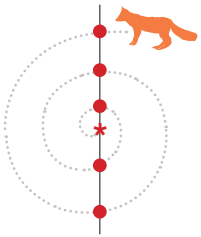

### Behaviors

*Dogs*



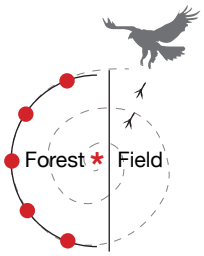

*When smell detected, will go straight to the attractive (lure/bait)*

*Canids (fox, coyote, wolf)*

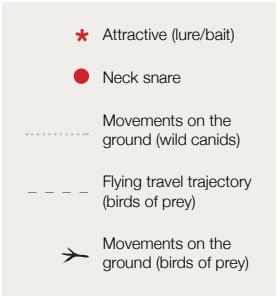


*The suspicion of these wild canids leads them to turn around the smells detected before approaching them*

*Eagles or birds of prey*

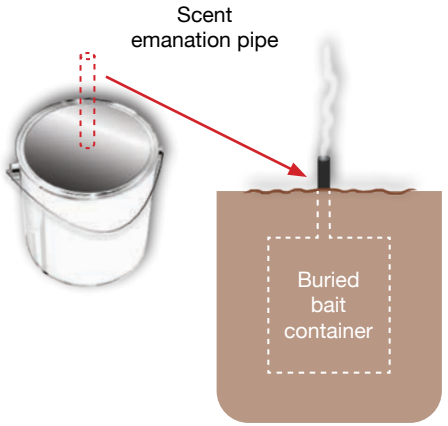



*Requires an open area for landing*




### 2. Hiding baits (buried, inside a bait container, covered)

*Use of a adapted bait container (eg. steel bucket with lid)*




*Covered bait*

For more information on proper birds of prey handling and rehabilitation techniques, consult: uqrop.qc.ca/en/

Update: May 2025

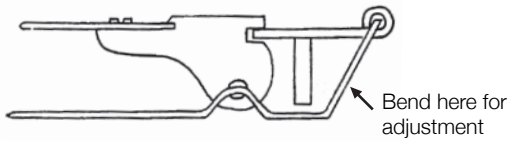
➡ *Check with the authorities in charge of wildlife to confirm regulations related to trap use in your trapping area*

## Elements of Trapping to Avoid Injuries / Limb Holding Traps

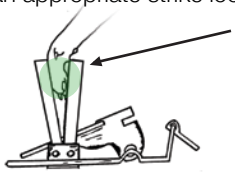
### For all species when possible, use a fixed anchor

### Jaw type traps and certain footsnares

Proper adjustment of the pan trigger...

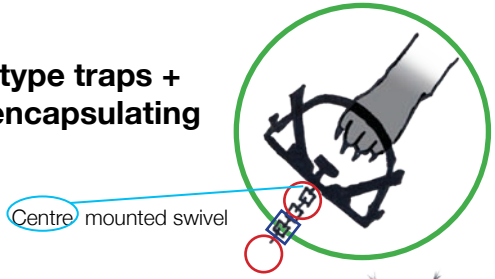



...Produces an appropriate strike location

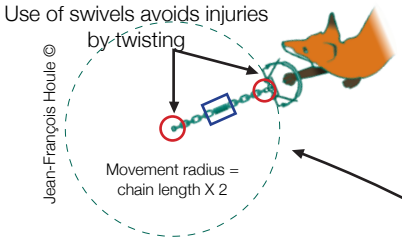


### Daily check of the trap sets

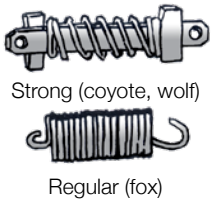
**Jaw type traps + Foot encapsulating**



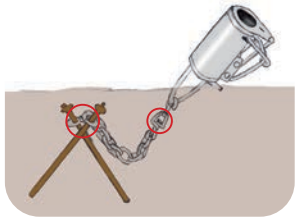

### Jaw Type Traps, Footsnares, Foot Encapsulating Traps

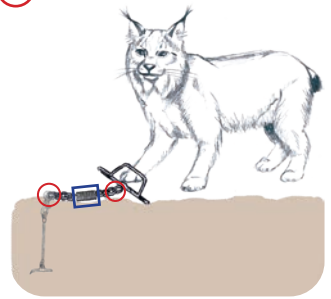



Shock absorber springs




All limb holding traps for raccoon and lynx: use stake anchoring systems





Canids, lynx, raccoon:

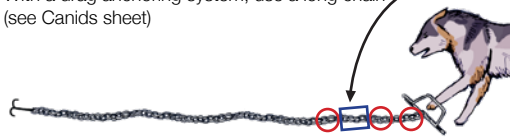
With a stake, use short chain or cable

Canids jaw trap only:

With a drag anchoring system, use a long chain (see Canids sheet)

Stake or drag trap anchoring:

Use an inline shock absorber spring and a sufficient number of swivels



○ = Swivel

□ = Shock absorber spring

These specifications only apply to the species-specific live capture traps. For a list of certified traps for each species, see:

**fur.ca/certified-traps/**



Update: May 2025

# Best Trapping Practices

**CANIDS** (fox, coyote, wolf) | **LIVE CAPTURE**

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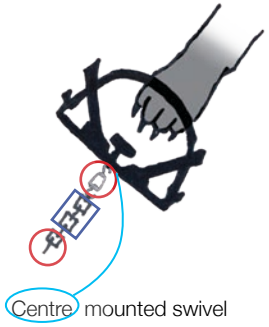
➡ *Check with the authorities in charge of wildlife to confirm regulations related to trap use in your trapping area*

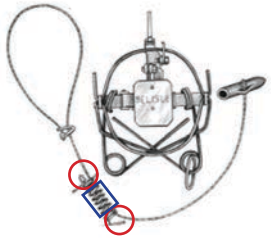
## Trap Set Details to Avoid Injuries

### Jaw type trap




### Footsnares

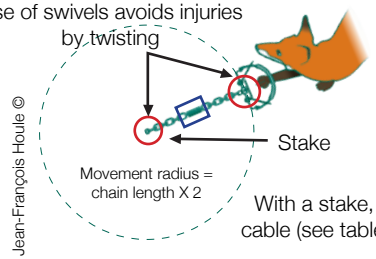
(not set)



(set)

### Jaw type trap and footsnares

Use of swivels avoids injuries by twisting




With a stake, use short chain or cable (see table)

Shock absorber springs

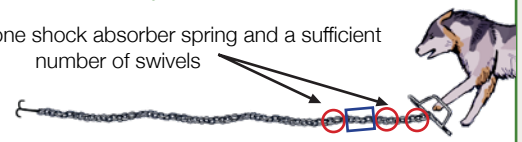
Strong (coyote, wolf)

Regular (fox)

| Recommended anchoring chain maximum length | | |
|---|---|---|
| | Mobile (drag) | Stake |
| Fox | 1.5 m | 0.3 m |
| Coyote | 2.5 m | 0.5 m |
| Wolf | 3 m | 1.2 m |

It is preferable to use a fixed anchor system in most cases

Use of at least one shock absorber spring and a sufficient number of swivels



With a drag anchoring system, use a long chain (see table)

○ = Swivel

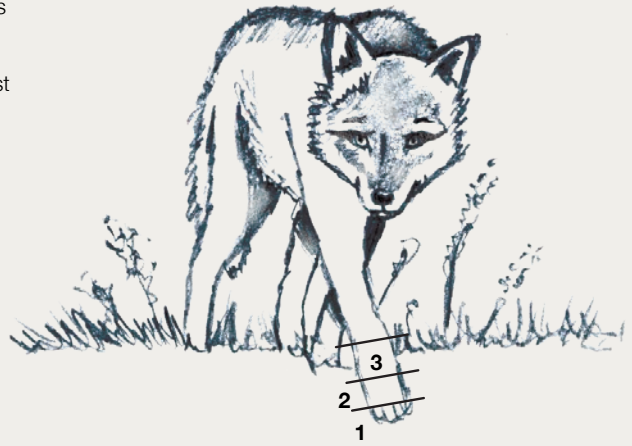
□ = Shock absorber spring

N.B.: For all footsnare cable, use stake only, no drag

## FOOTSNARE / JAW TYPE TRAP

| Optimal Strike Locations | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 |
| ✓ | ✓ | |

**1** Toes
**2** Pad
**3** Wrist




These specifications only apply to the live capture traps for these species. For a certified trap list for coyote and wolf, see:

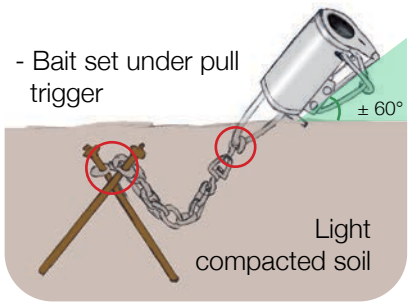
**fur.ca/certified-traps/**

For more details, check the PIGEC manual (ftgq.qc.ca/boutique/manuel-pigec)
Update: May 2025

➡ *Check with the authorities in charge of wildlife to confirm regulations related to trap use in your trapping area*

## Trap Set Details To Avoid Injuries

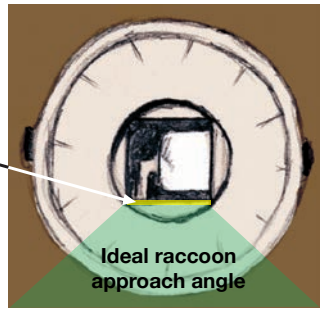
### Lil' Grizz Get'rz



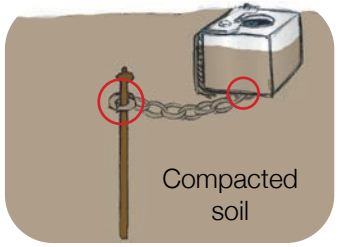

- Bait set under pull trigger

### Egg trap

- Positioned this way, the restraining arm (steel rod) strikes on the pad side




### Duffer

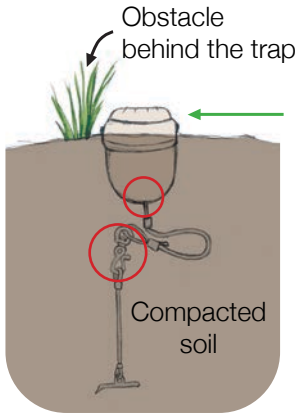



For all trap models:

- Short chaining system
- 2 swivels
- Stake anchoring system

Duffer and Egg trap:

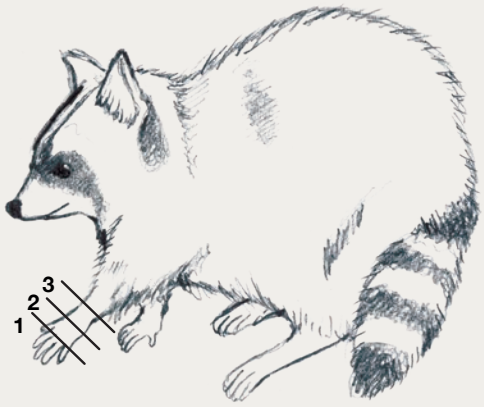
- Partly buried underground (compacted soil)
- Bait set on the trigger




← = Approach by the animal ◯ = Swivel

## FOOT ENCAPSULATING TRAPS

| Optimal Strike Location | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 |
| | ✓ | |




**1** Toes
**2** Pad
**3** Wrist

These specifications only apply to the live capture traps for this species. For a list of certified traps, see:

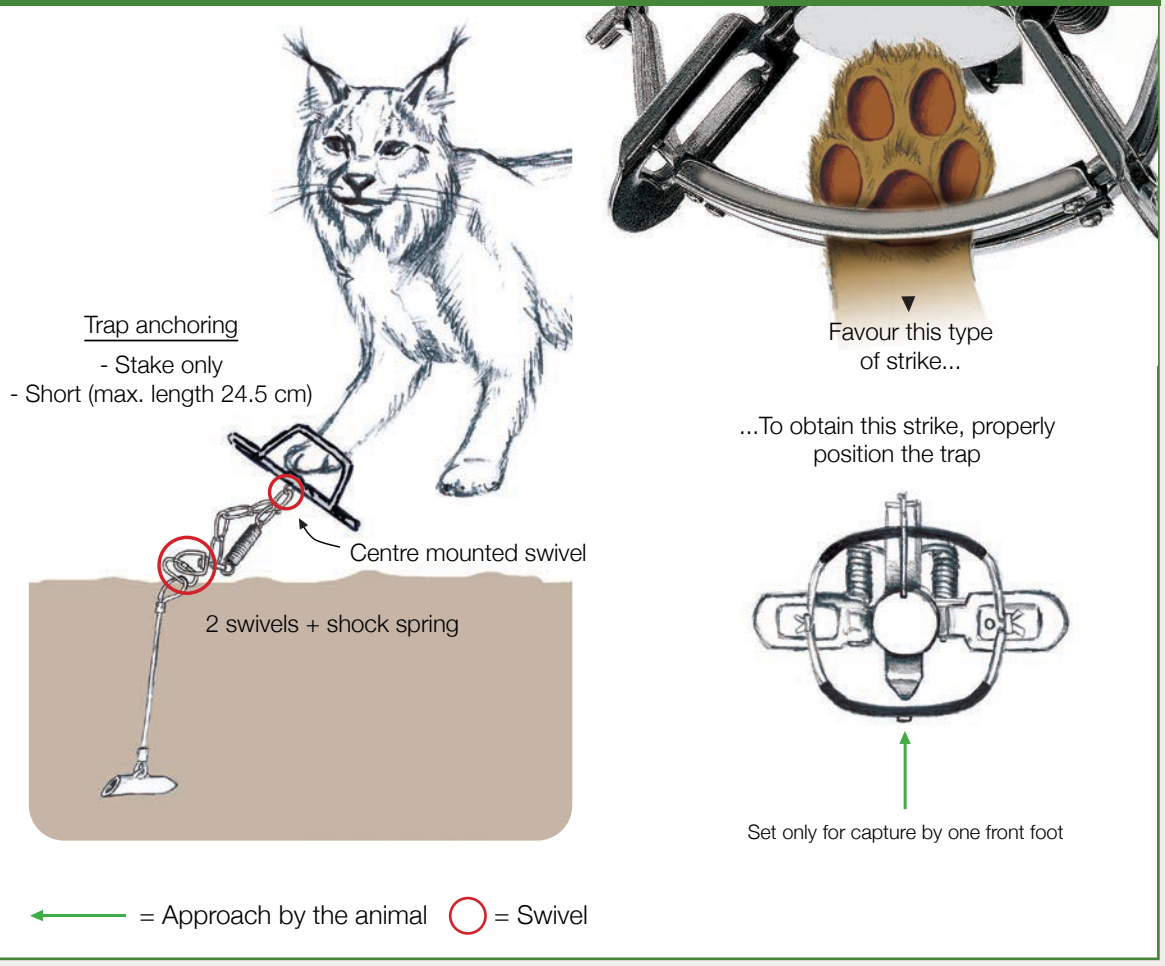
**fur.ca/certified-traps/**



Update: May 2025

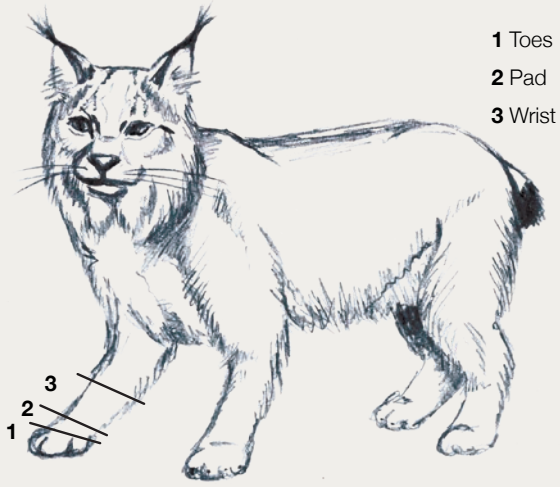
➡ *Check with the authorities in charge of wildlife to confirm regulations related to trap use in your trapping area*

## Trap Set Details to Avoid Injuries




## FOOTSNARE / JAW TYPE TRAP

| Optimal Strike Locations | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 |
| ✓ | ✓ | |




These specifications only apply to the live capture traps for this species. For a list of certified traps, see:

**fur.ca/certified-traps/**

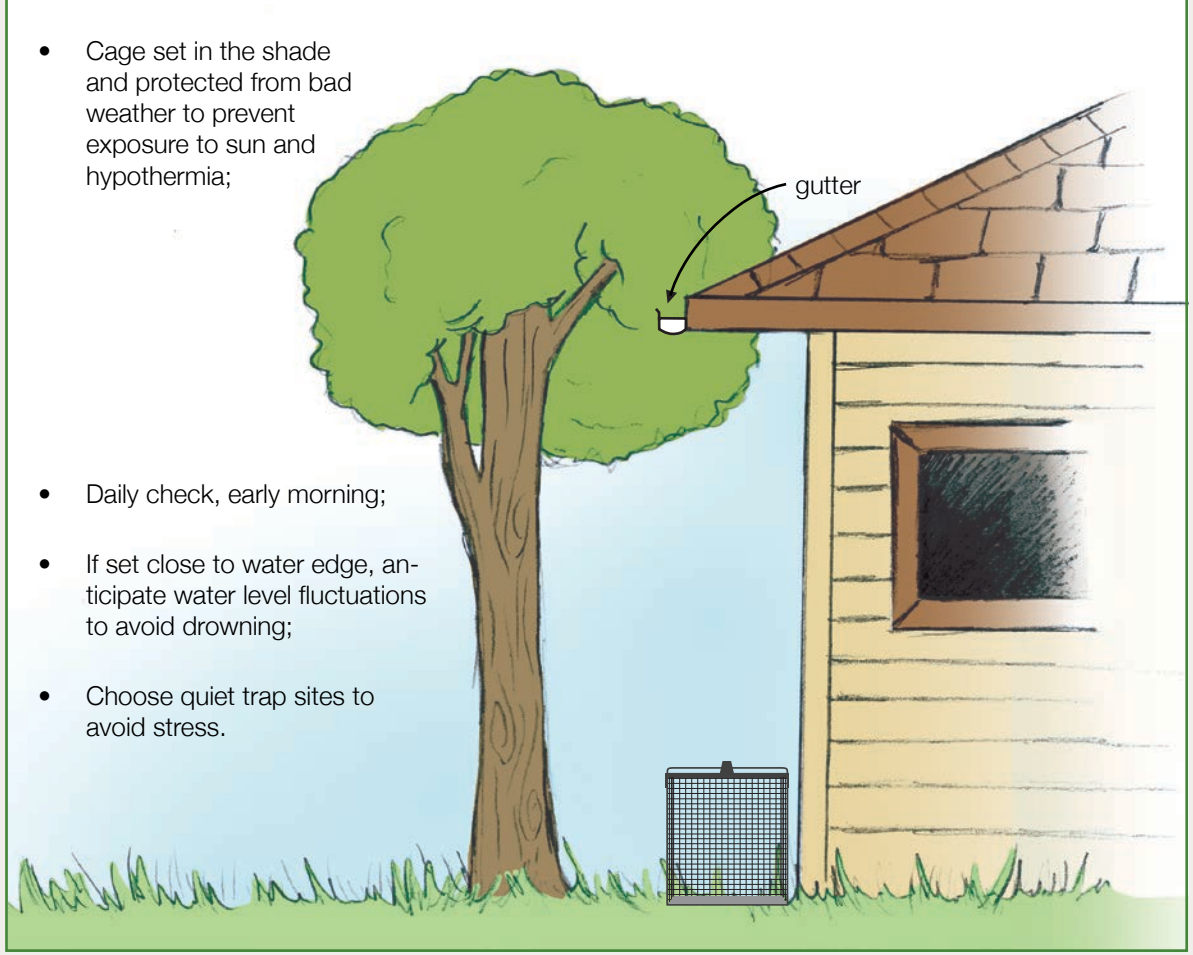


Update: May 2025

➡ *Check with the authorities in charge of wildlife to confirm regulations related to trap use in your trapping area*

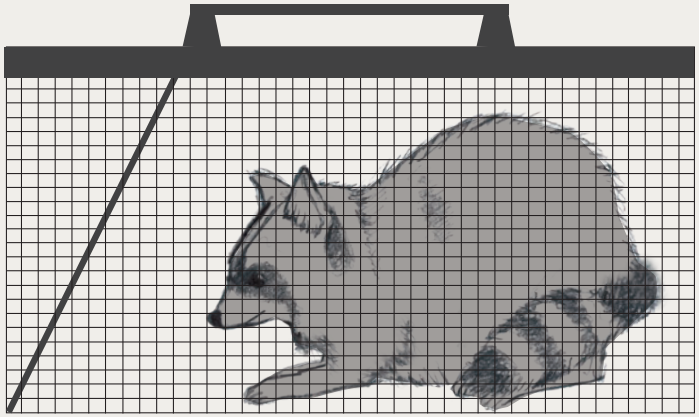
## Installation Details

- Cage set in the shade and protected from bad weather to prevent exposure to sun and hypothermia;




- Daily check, early morning;
- If set close to water edge, anticipate water level fluctuations to avoid drowning;
- Choose quiet trap sites to avoid stress.

## CAGE



For a list of raccoon certified traps, see:

**fur.ca/certified-traps/**



Update: May 2025

➡ *Check with the authorities in charge of wildlife to confirm regulations related to trap use in your trapping area*

Daily visite check. Trap set time = end PM or day.
Visit = early morning (prevents insolation, hyperthermia, injuries)

## AIHTS Certified beaver live capture cage models

Hancock/Koro

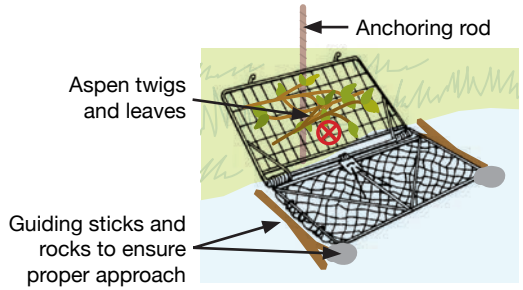
Comstock

Ezee Set/Dam Beaver

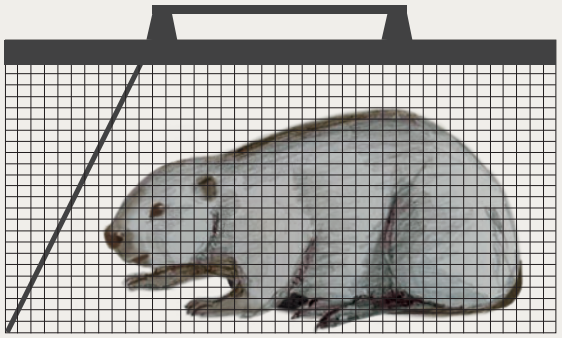
Recommended trap set details to avoid injuries, stress, mortality:

Covered and shaded site :
✓diminue le niveau de stress
✓diminue le risque de blessures

⊗ = Lure position
(beaver castoreum)




## CAGE



These specifications only apply to the live capture traps for this species. For a list of certified traps, see:

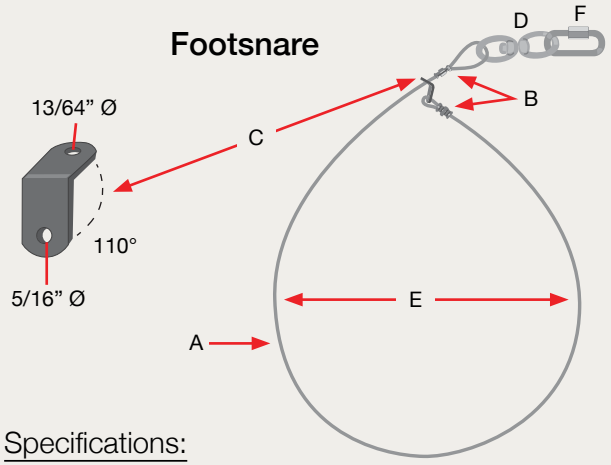
**fur.ca/certified-traps/**



Update: May 2025

➡ *Check with the authorities in charge of wildlife to confirm regulations related to trap use in your trapping area*

## Footsnare



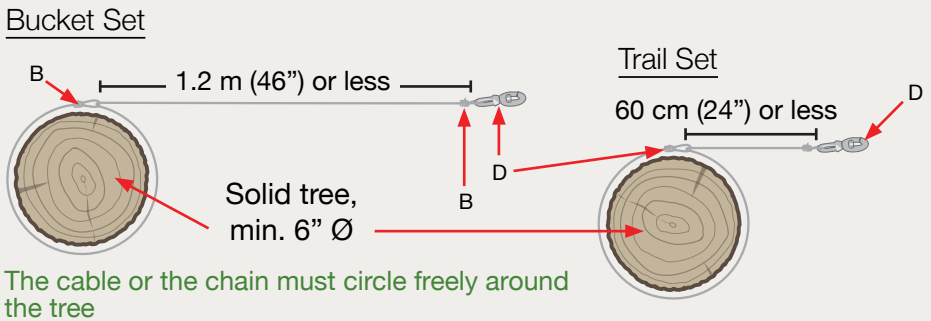

Specifications:

A. Flexible steel cable, construction 7 x 19, 3/16" diameter
B. Double ferrule 3/16"
C. Lock: 110° angle, 3/16" thickness, 5/8" width, rounded edges ***(single use)***
D. Swivel: minimum 880 lb test
E. Diameter of 6" and less (bucket set)
   8" and less (trail set)
F. Quick link 5/16 (1 760 lb test)

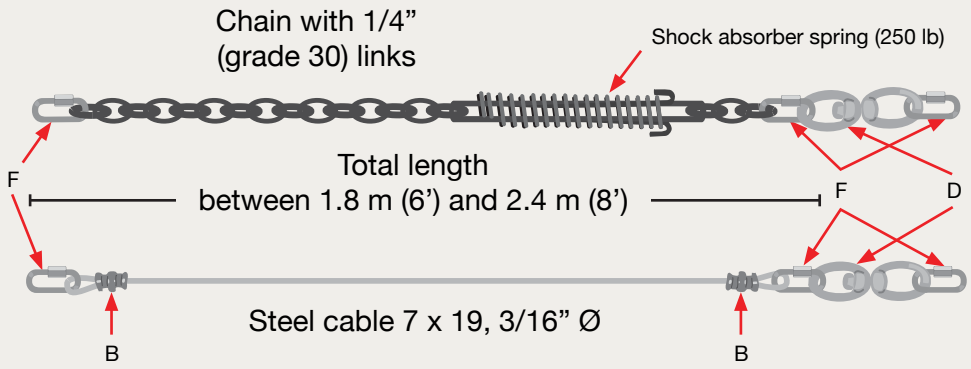
**IMPORTANT:** fixed anchor ensures a more reliable operation of the footsnare swivel.

## Fixed Anchor Systems (recommended)

with steel cable 3/16" Ø or chain (1/4" links)




The cable or the chain must circle freely around the tree



Best Trapping Practices

**BLACK BEAR** | **LIVE CAPTURE**

(recommanded) **FOOTSNARE / FIXED ANCHOR SYSTEMS**

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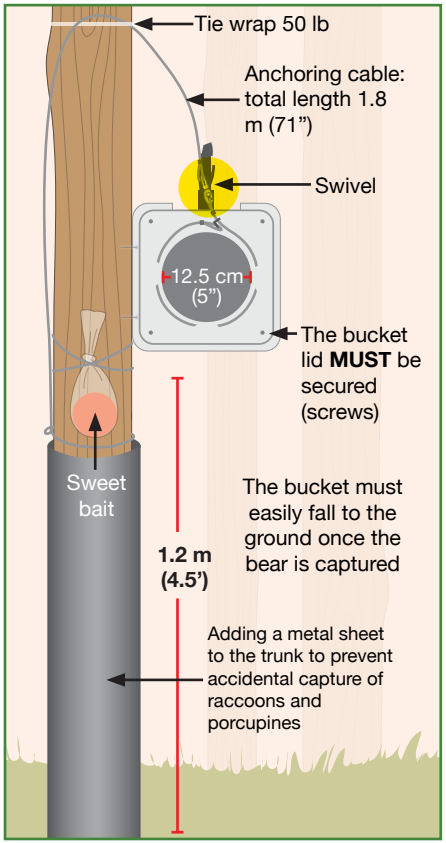
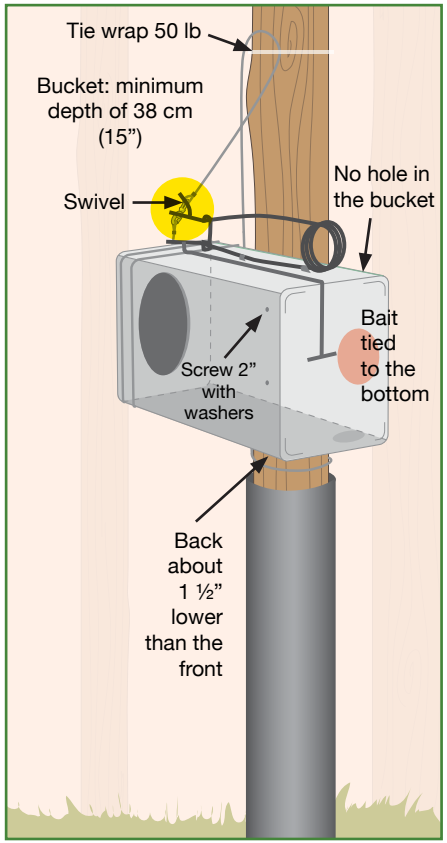
➡ *Check with the authorities in charge of wildlife to confirm regulations related to trap use in your trapping area*

## THE SWIVEL MUST ALWAYS BE FUNCTIONAL

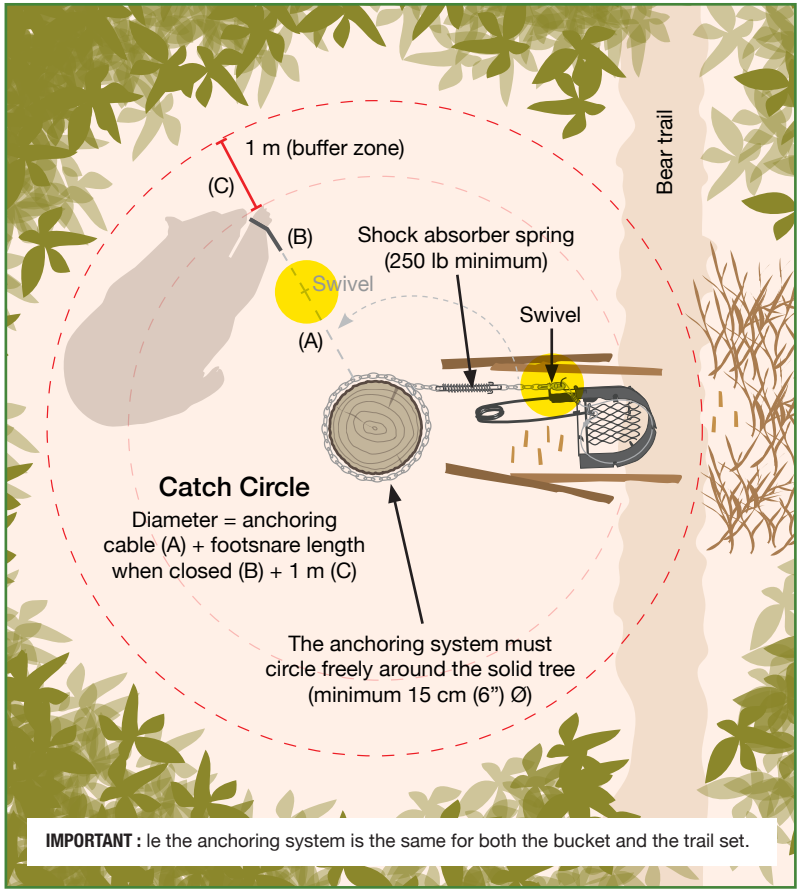
### BUCKET SET




**IMPORTANT:** the anchoring system is the same for both the bucket and the trail set.

### TRAIL (GROUND) SET




**IMPORTANT :** le the anchoring system is the same for both the bucket and the trail set.

➡ *Check with the authorities in charge of wildlife to confirm regulations related to trap use in your trapping area*

## RECOMMENDED TRAPPING PRACTICES AND CABLE SYSTEM COMPONENTS AND DESIGN

Relaxing cable restraint is a cable used to capture and hold an animal by the neck with the objective of maintaining it alive while minimizing injuries during the contention time period.

It is used in several parts of North America to live capture coyotes for different reasons, mainly where there is a risk of incidental capture of non-target species such as domestic dogs, livestock and big game species.

Properly built and set, it allows for the releasing of non-target animals and, if necessary, of target species with minimal harm.

Ongoing recent trap research programs in Canada and the USA involving government agencies, veterinarians, trappers, trap manufacturers have permitted to identify different characteristics that will permit to achieve these goals for the capture of coyotes. This document is identifying these different components that trap research results have confirmed as to be the basic ones in order to minimize injuries and stress to captured animals.

Since capture efficiency and selectivity are related to local field conditions and wildlife species, and therefore can vary from one region to the other, we recommend that you consult your provincial or state wildlife agencies and trappers association to learn about the best applicable setting techniques in your trapping area.

- **CABLE (AVIATION CABLE)**
  - Strand Construction: single 1 × 19 or 1 × 7, multi 7 × 7 or 7 × 19;
  - Diameter: 1/8” or 3/32”. If too small, it will increase possibility of injuries and chewing by coyote (escape).

- **LOCKS (RELAXING)**
  - Relaxing models, e.g. Micro Lock, Penny (90-Degree Bend Washer Lock), Kaatz Relax-a-Lock, Berkshire Washer Lock, Reichart™ Washer Lock, No. 4 Gregerson™ Lock, BMI™ Slide Free Lock;
  - Passively non-powered activated (by the animal itself);
  - No Powered assisted locks (e.g. Ram Power Snare, Stinger Spring, Amberg Spring).

- **CABLE LOOP (FIGURES 1, 3)**
  - Size (diameter) minimum 10” (25 cm), maximum 12” (30 cm);
  - Height from the ground to the bottom part of the loop: 10” (25 cm);
  - Deer Stop (to prevent capture by a leg): single ferrule cramped on cable to allow a closed loop at 2 ½” (6 cm) diameter.

- **SWIVEL**
  - Install swivel number 1 on the cable as close as possible to the end of the 10 to 12” (25 to 30 cm) diameter snare loop; **(FIGURES 1, 4)**
  - Install swivel number 2 at the end of the cable extension on the fixed anchoring point. Cable extension must be as short as possible; **(FIGURES 1, 4)**
  - Captured animal must be able to circle (360°) freely around the fixed anchoring point. **(FIGURES 4, 5, 6)**

- **EXTENSION TO THE CABLE (FIGURE 2)**

  Must be as short as possible to prevent a whipping action when the coyote in movement hits the full extension of the cable. This reduces the risk of injury and possible cable entanglement resulting in death. **(FIGURE 4)**

- **ANCHORING POINT**

  Snare cable or extension cable has to be attached to a solid (fixed) anchoring point directly by a swivel. The cable MUST be able to freely turn around the anchoring point. **(FIGURES 4, 5, 6)**

  For ground stake, it should be a metal rod of 30” (75 cm). In loose substrate, use a double one. Ground cable anchor (e.g. Berkshire, Finned) and solid tree can also be used as anchors.

- **ENTANGLEMENT OF THE CABLE**

  There MUST BE NO entanglement of the snare or extension cable. The swivel(s) MUST be able to function freely during the captive time period. **(FIGURE 4)**

- **BREAKAWAY DEVICE (BIG GAME AND LIVESTOCK) (FIGURES 2, 3)**

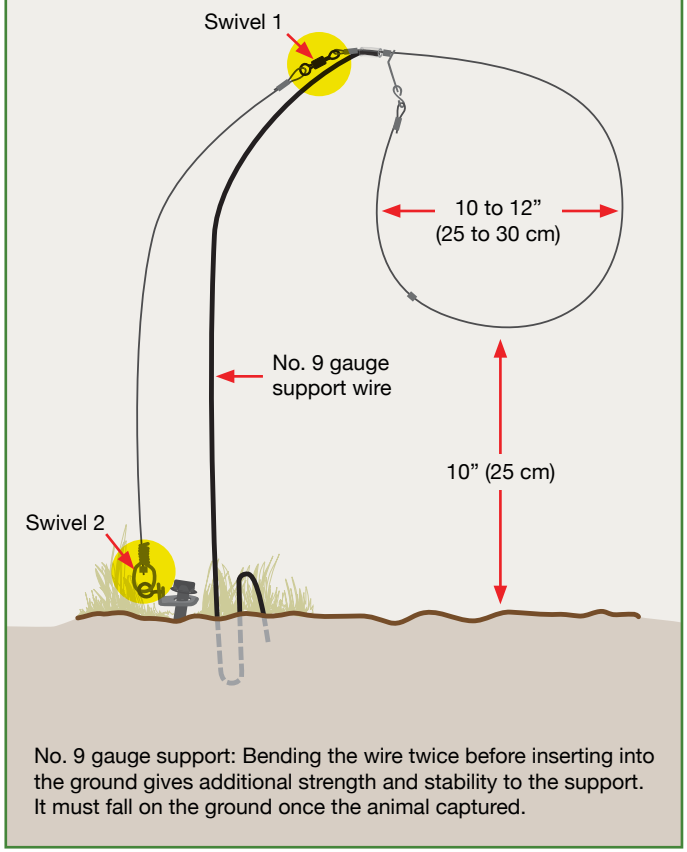
  An appropriate breakaway component is added to allow self releasing of non-target species. Check appropriate resistance per species.

# RELAXING
## CABLE RESTRAINT



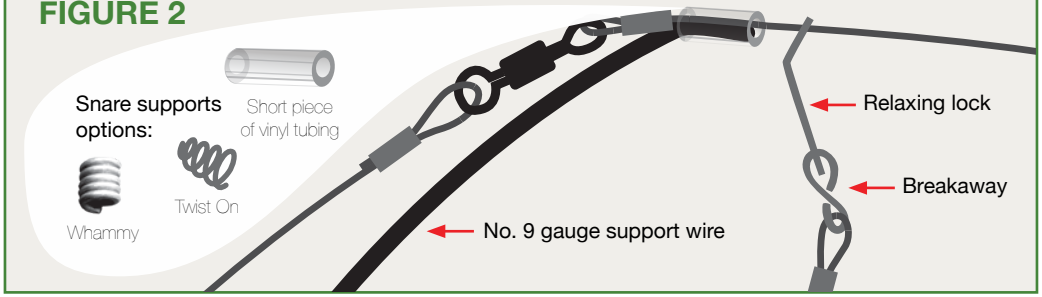
➡ *Check with the authorities in charge of wildlife to confirm regulations related to trap use in your trapping area*

## FIGURE 1



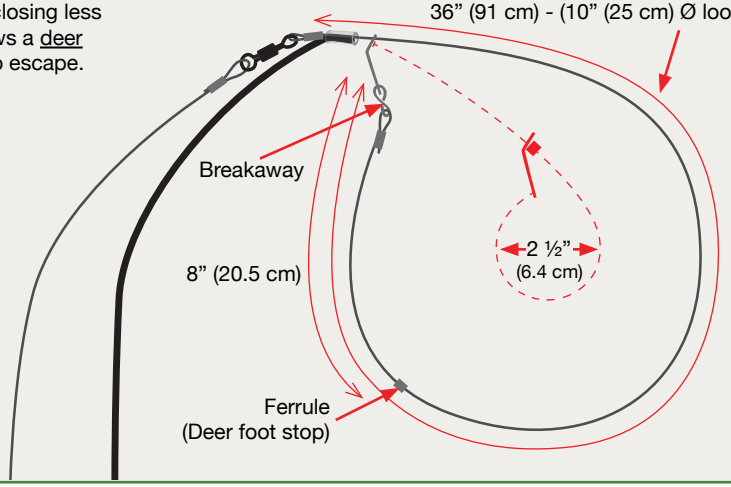

No. 9 gauge support: Bending the wire twice before inserting into the ground gives additional strength and stability to the support. It must fall on the ground once the animal captured.

## FIGURE 2




Loop Stops: It is fixed at 8” (20.5 cm) from the lock hole and keeps the loop from closing less than 2 ½ Ø. This allows a deer captured by the leg to escape.

## FIGURE 3



# RELAXING
## CABLE RESTRAINT



➡ *Check with the authorities in charge of wildlife to confirm regulations related to trap use in your trapping area*

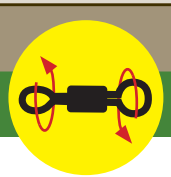
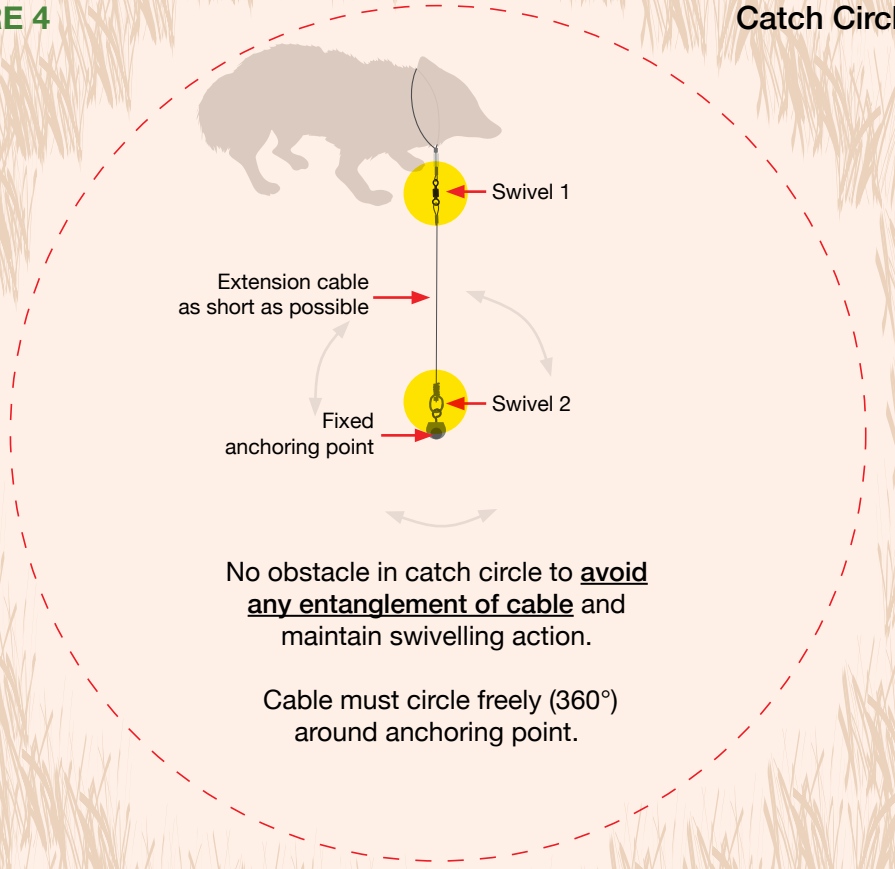
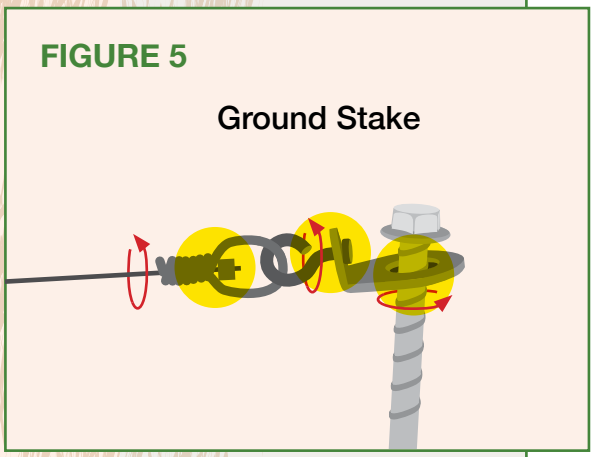
**! NO ENTANGLEMENT OF CABLE**  **SWIVELS MUST ALWAYS BE FUNCTIONAL**

**FIGURE 4**




**FIXED ANCHORING ONLY**

**FIGURE 5**



➡ *Check with the authorities in charge of wildlife to confirm regulations related to trap use in your trapping area*

## COYOTE RELAXING CABLE RESTRAINT MEETING AIHTS* REQUIREMENTS
## DESCRIPTION OF COMPONENTS

### KAATZ RELAX-A-LOCK, BERKSHIRE LOCK, 90-DEGREE BEND WASHER LOCK (PENNY LOCK) AND MICRO LOCK

Kaatz Relax-a-Lock

Berkshire Washer Lock

90-Degree Bend Washer Lock (Penny Lock)

Micro Lock

**SNARE + SET CHARACTERISTICS**

- 3/32” diameter 7 x 7 or 1 x 19 weave cable (both loop and extension).
- Devices of a total of 6’ (1.83 m) in length composed of two parts: a 38” (96.5 cm) catch loop cable and a 34” (86.5 cm) extension cable.
- A first No. 8 barrel swivel placed between the loop and extension cables, 38” (96.5 cm) from the cable loop end (to create a maximum catch loop diameter of 12” (30 cm)).
- A second No. 9 wire end swivel attached for staking.
- A ferrule stop placed 8” (20.5 cm) from the cable end loop to create a 2.5” (6.4 cm) diameter loop stop (deer stop).
- A breakaway ferrule clamped on the cable end (behind the lock) and designed to break at 350 lb.
- Vinyl tubing as the snare support collar.
- Bottom of cable loop set between 9-12” (23-30 cm) from the ground or packed snow.

*Agreement on International Humane Trapping Standards

Source: Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies, USA



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